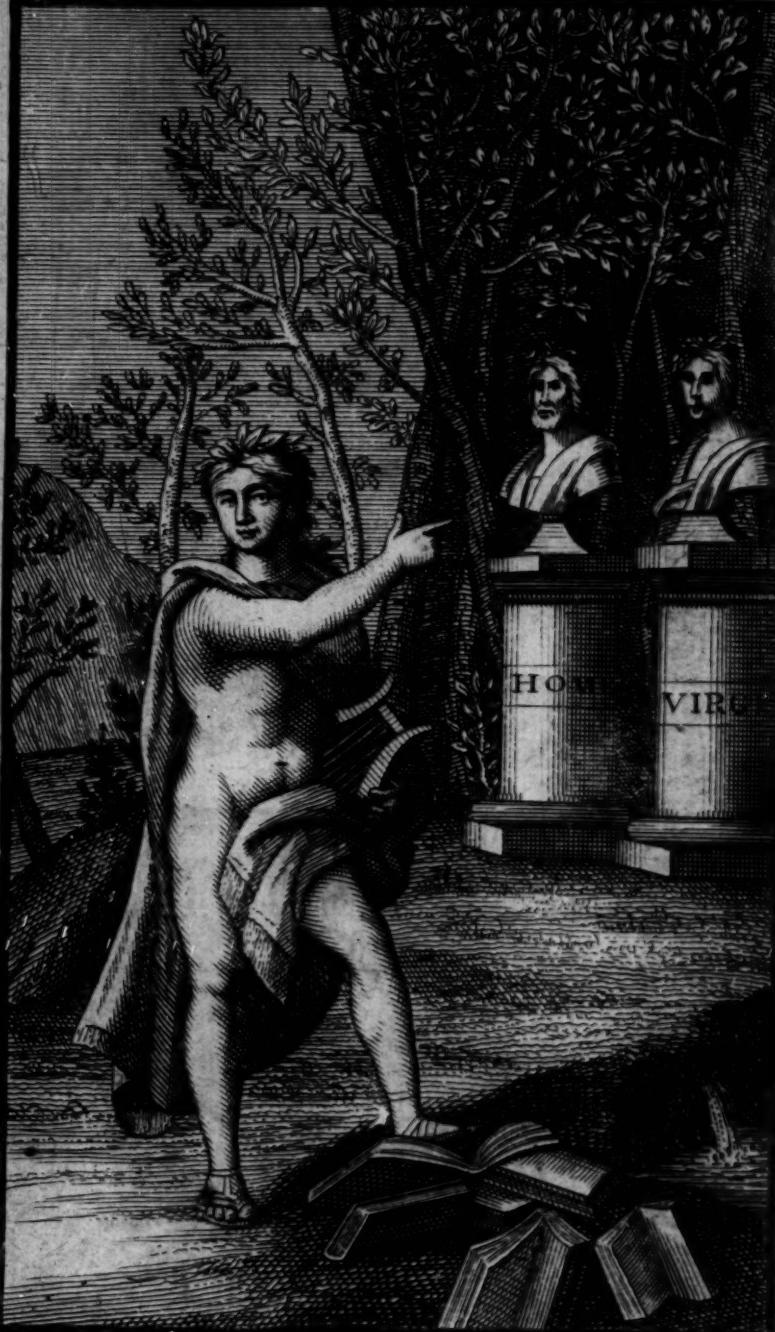




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Boileau Desfranca (R.)

K THE

A R T
OF
POETRY,
IN
Four CANTOS.

By Monsieur BOILEAU.

The SECOND EDITION, Revis'd and
Compar'd with the last PARIS Edition.



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Printed for E. CURLL at the Dial and Bible against
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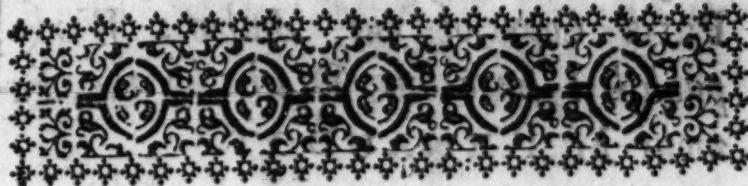
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ЗОТЫ



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Advertisement.



HO Sir WILLIAM SOAME'S Translation of the following Poem, was in several Places very well done; yet the Diction of Poetry has been so much improv'd since his Time, that upon strictly comparing this Piece with the Original, it has been found capable of many Amendments, not only in the Versification, but the Sense.

In this Edition are likewise inserted Classical References, and some curious

Advertisement.

*Explanatory Notes, taken from the last
Paris Copy of our Author's Works,
publish'd since his Death by the Fa-
mous M. RENAUDOT.*

28 OC 62



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THE



T H E

* Art of POETRY.

C A N T O . I.



ASH Author, 'tis a vain Presumptuous
Crime

To undertake the sacred Art of Rhyme;

+ If at thy Birth the Stars that rul'd thy
Mind

Shone adverse, of the unpoetick kind;

Thy Want of Genius soon shall be betray'd;

Phœbus prove deaf, and Pegasus a Jade.

Y O U, whom the Muses Syren-Charms invite
To tempt an untry'd Sea and dang'rous Flight,

* This Poem was compos'd by the Author, in the Year 1672.

† Hor. Art. Poet. vers. 385.

Tu nihil invita dices facieſe Minerva.

Forbear in fruitless Verse to lose your time,
 Or take for Genius the Desire of Rhyme :
 Fear the Allurements of a specious Bait,
 And well consider your own Force and Weight.

NATURE abounds in every kind of Wit,
 And to each Author does a Talent fit.
 One may in Verse describe an Amorous Flame,
 Another sharpen a short Epigram :
 * *Prior* a Hero's mighty Acts extol ;
Congreve write Comedy and Pastoral :
 But Authors who themselves too much esteem,
 Lose their own Genius, and mistake their Theme.
 Thus in times past + *Dubartas* vainly writ,
 And mingled sacred Truth with trifling Wit ;
 Impertinently, and without delight,
 Describ'd the *Israelites* triumphant Flight ;
 And following *Moses* o'er the sandy Plain,
 Perish'd with *Pharaoh* in th' *Arabian* Main.

W H A T E' R you write of Pleasant or Sublime,
 Always let Sense accompany your Rhyme :
 Vainly they seem two different ways to draw,
 Rhyme must be made to close with Reason's Law.

* *Carmen Saculare*, &c. + *Dubartas* *Translated by Sylvester.*

And

And when to conquer her you bend your Force,
The Mind will triumph in the noble Course ;
To Reason's Yoke she quickly will incline,
Which, far from hurting, renders her Divine :
But, if neglected, will as quickly stray,
And master Reason, which she should obey.
Love Reason then : and let whate'er you write
Borrow from her its Beauty, Worth, and Light.
Most Writers, mounted on a resty Muse,
Extravagant and sensless Objects chuse ;
They think they err, if in their Verse they fall
On any Thought that's plain, and natural :
Fly this Excess ; and let *Italians* be
Vain Authors of false glitt'ring Poesy.
All ought to aim at Sense ; but most in vain
Strive the hard Pass and slipp'ry Height to gain :
You're lost, if you the right or left prefer ;
Reason has but one way, and cannot err.
Sometimes an Author, fond of his own Thought,
Pursues his Object till 'tis over-wrought :
If he describes a House, he shews the Face,
And after walks you round from place to place ;
Here is a *Vista*, there the Doors unfold,
Balconies here are ballustr'd with Gold ;

Then counts the Rounds and Ovals in the Hall,

* *The Freeze, the Fesoon, and the Astragal:*

Tir'd with his tedious Pomp, away I run,

And skip o'er twenty Pages to be gone.

Of such Descriptions the vain Folly see,

And shun their barren Superfluity.

All that is needless, carefully avoid;

The Mind once satisfy'd, is quickly cloy'd:

He cannot write, who knows not to give o'er;

† To mend one Fault, he makes a hundred more:

A Verse was weak, you turn it much too strong,

|| And grow obscure, for fear you should be long.

Some are not gaudy, but are flat and dry;

Not to be low, another soars too high.

Would you of every one deserve the Praise?

In writing, vary your Discourse, and Phrase:

A frozen Stile, that neither ebbs or flows,

Instead of pleasing, makes us gape and doze.

Those tedious Authors are esteem'd by none

Who tire us, humming the same heavy Tone.

* *Verse of Scudery.*

† *In Vitium dicit culpæ fuga, si caret Arte.* *Ibid. Vers. 31.*

¶ *Ibid. verse 25.*

*Brevis esse labore,
Obscurus no; lectantem levia, nervi
Deficiunt, animiq; professus grandia, turget,
Serpit humili tutus nimium, timidusq; procellæ.*

Happy,

Happy, who in his Verse can gently steer
 From Grave to Light, from Pleasant to Severe :
 His Works, where-ever found, the World admires,
 * And *Curll* and *Sanger* shall be teiz'd with Buyers.
 In all you write, be neither low nor vile :
 The meanest Theme may have a proper Stile.

THE dull + Burlesque appear'd with Impudence,
 And pleas'd by Novelty, in spight of Sense.
 All, except trivial Points, grew out of date ;
Parnassus spoke the Cant of *Belingsgate* :
 Boundless and mad, disorder'd Rhyme was seen,
 Disguis'd *Apollo* chang'd to *Harlequin*.
 This Plague, which first in Country-Towns began,
 Cities and Kingdoms quickly over-ran ;
 The leudest Scribblers some Admirers found,
 || And our *Mock-Virgil* was a while renown'd :
 But this low stuff the Town at last despis'd,
 And scorn'd the Folly that they once had priz'd ;
 For Wit and Nature had a just regard,
 And left the Country to admire *Ned Ward*.

* In the Original, M. Boileau names his Bookseller Barbin.

† The Burlesque Stile was extremely in vogue from the beginning of the last Century, till about the Year 1660 ; and then it fell.

‡ Cotton's *Virgil Travesty*. M. Boileau, in the Original, reflects upon M. Dassoucy, who translated Ovid's Metamorphosis into Doggrel Verse.

6 The Art of POETRY.

Let not so mean a Stile your Muse debase,
But learn from *Garth* the true Satirick Grace:
And let Burlesque in Ballads be employ'd ;
Yet noisy Bombast carefully avoid,
Nor think by loud tempestuous Phrase to rise ;
** Exploded Thunder tears th' embowel'd Skies.*
† Nor, with Sylvester, bridle up the Floods,
And periwig with Snow the bald-pate Woods.
Chuse a right Key; be grave without constraint,
Great without Pride, and lovely without Paint :
Write what your Reader may be pleas'd to hear ;
And, for the Measure, have a careful Ear.
On easy Numbers fix your happy choice ;
Of jarring Sounds avoid the odious Noise :
The fullest Verse and the most labour'd Sense,
Displease us, if the Ear once take offence.
Our antient Verse (as homely as the Times)
Was rude, unmeasur'd, only tagg'd with Rhymes :
|| Number and Cadence, that have since been shwon,
To those unpolish'd Writers were unknown.
Chaucer was he, who in that darker Age,
By Nature's Rules restrain'd Poetick Rage ;

** Verse in Pr. Arthur.*

† Verse of Sylvester's Tranlation of Dubartas.

|| Most of the ancient French Romances are written in a confus'd, disorderly Rhyme ; witness the Romance of the Rose, and many more.

Spencer did next in Pastorals excel,
And taught the noble Art of writing well ;
To stricter Rules the Stanza did confine,
And found for Poetry a richer Mine.

Then *D'Avenant* came ; who, with a new-found Art,
Chang'd all, spoil'd all, and had his way apart :
His haughty Muse all others did despise,
And thought in Triumph to bear off the Prize,
Till the sharp-sighted Criticks of the Times
In their Mock-*Gondibert* expos'd his Rhymes ;
The Laurels he assum'd, they did refuse,
And dash'd the hopes of his aspiring Muse.

This head-strong Writer, falling from on high,
Made following Authors take less liberty.

Waller came last, but was the first whose Art
Just Weight and Measure did to Verse impart ;
Who of a well-plac'd Word could teach the Force,
And shew for Poetry a nobler Course :

His happy Genius our rough Tongue refin'd,
And easy Words with pleasing Numbers join'd ;
His flowing Verses in good method rang'd,
And to soft Harmony harsh Discord chang'd.

His Laws which have with long Success been try'd,
To present Authors now may be a Guide.
Tread boldly in his Steps secure from Fear,
And be like him, in your Expressions, clear.

If in your loitring Verse your Sense decays,
 My Patience tires, and my Attention strays,
 And from your vain Discourse I turn my Mind,
 Nor search an Author difficult to find.
 There is a kind of Writer pleas'd with Sound,
 Whose fustian Head with Clouds is compass'd round,
 No Reason can disperse 'em with its Light ;
 Learn then to think, e'er you pretend to write.
 * As are our Sentiments obscure or clear,
 So will our Diction bright or dull appear ;
 What we conceive, with ease we can express ;
 Words to the Notions flow with readiness.

O B S E R V E the Language well in all you write,
 And swerve not from it in your loftiest Flight,
 The smoothest Verse, and the exactest Sense
 Displease us, if bad *English* give offence :
 A barb'rous Phrase no Reader can approve ;
 Nor Bombast, Noise, or Affectation love.
 Without true Stile, the Labours of the Muse
 Can neither Profit or Delight produce.

* *Ibid. Verse 311.*
 Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.

Take

CANTO I.

9

* Take time for thinking, never work in haste;
 And value not your self for writing fast.
 A rapid Poem, with such fury writ,
 Shews want of Judgment, not abounding Wit:
 More pleas'd we are to see a River lead
 His gentle Streams along a flow'ry Mead,
 Than from high Banks to hear loud Torrents roar,
 With foamy Waters on a muddy Shore.
 Gently make haste, of Labour nor afraid;
 Consider twenty times of what you've said.
 Polish, repolish, every Colour lay,
 And sometimes add, but oftner take away.
 'Tis not enough, when swarming Faults are writ,
 That here and there are scatter'd Sparks of Wit;
 Each Object must be fix'd in the due Place,
 And diff'ring Parts have corresponding Grace:
 Till, by a curious Art dispos'd, we find
 + One perfect Whole, of all the Pieces join'd.
 Keep to your Subject close, in all you say
 Nor for a sounding Sentence lose the way.

* *Ibid. vers. 292.*

— Carmine reprehendite, quod non
 Multa dies & multa litura coercuit, atque
 Praeceptum decies non castigavit ad unguem.

† *Ibid. Vers. 152.*

Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepet imum.
 — Sit quodvis simplex dumtaxat & unum.

The publick Censure for your Writings fear,
 And to your self be Critick most severe.
 Fantastick Wits their darling Follies love,
 But find you faithful Friends that will reprove ;
 That on your Works may look with careful Eyes,
 And of your Faults be zealous Enemies :
 Lay by an Author's Pride, be never vain,
 Esteem a Friend, the Flatterer disdain,
 Who seems to like, but means not what he says :
 Embrace true Counsel, but suspect false Praise.

* A Sycophant will every thing admire ;
 Each Verse, each Sentence sets his Soul on fire :
 All is divine ! There's not a word amiss !
 He shakes with Joy, and weeps with Tenderness ;
 He burden's you with Praise, he stamps, he stares,
 'Tis admirable ! Exquisite ! he swears :
 But Truth ne'er puts on those impetuous Airs.

* *Ibid. Verf. 426.*

Tu seu donaris, seu quid donare voles cui,
 Nolito adversus tibi factos ducere plenum
 Lætitia, clamabit enim, pulchre, bene, recte,
 Pallefecit super his, etiam stillabit amicis
 Ex oculis rorem, saliet, runderet pede terram.
 Ut, qui conducti plorant in funere, dicunt
 Et faciunt prope plura dolentibus ex animo : Sic
 Derisor vero plus laudatore moyetur.

* A Faithful Friend is careful of your Fame,
 And freely will your heedless Errors blame ;
 He cannot pardon a neglected Line,
 But Verse to Rule and Order will confine.
 Reproves of Words the too affected Sound ;
Here the Sense shocks ; There your Expression's round ;
Your Fancy flags, and your Discourse grows vain ;
Your Terms improper ; make 'em just and plain.
 Thus 'tis a faithful Friend will freedom use ;
 But Authors, partial to their darling Muse,
 Think, to protect it, they have just Pretence,
 And at your friendly Counsel take offence.
Said you of this, that the Expression's flat ?
Your Servant, Sir ; you must excuse me that.

He answers you : ‘ This word has here no Grace,
 ‘ Pray leave it out : That, Sir’s the proper’st Place.
 ‘ This Turn I like not : ’Tis approv’d by all.

Thus resolute not from a Fault to fall,

* *Ibid. Vers. 438.*

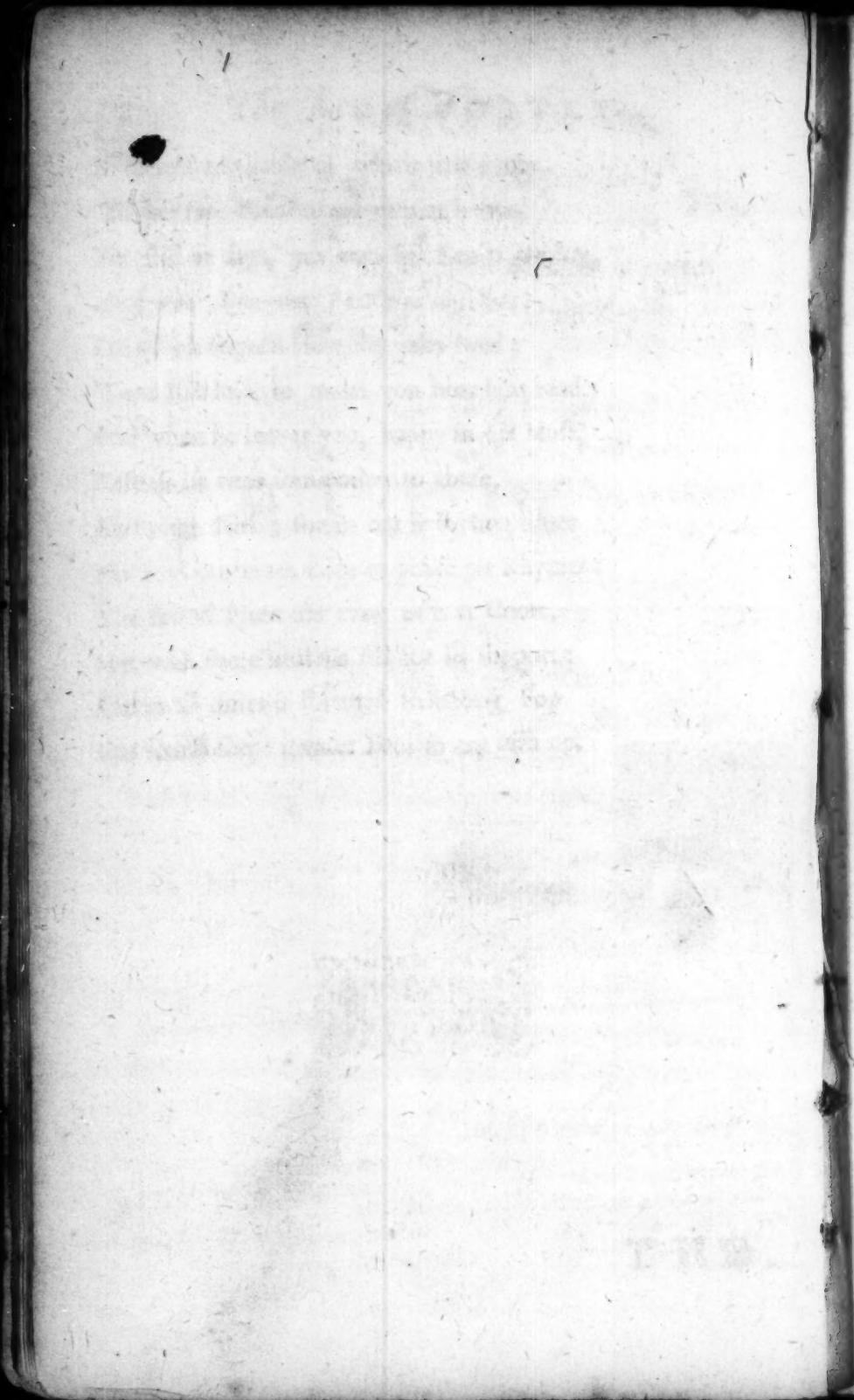
Quintilio si quid recitares, corrige, sodes,
 Hoc, aiebat, & hoc ; melius te posse negares
 Bis, terq; expertum frustra, delere jubebat
 Et male tornatos incudi reddere versus, &c.
 Vir bonus & prudens versus reprehendet inertes,
 Culpabit duros, incomitis allinet atrum
 Tranverso calamo signum ; ambitiofa recidet
 Ornamentas partim claris lucem dare coget,
 Argent ambiue dictum, mutanda notabit.

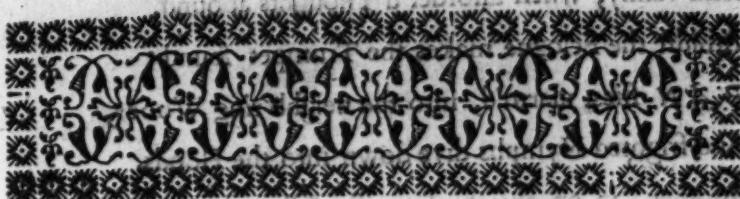
If there's a Syllable of which you doubt,
'Tis his sure Reason not to blot it out.
Yet still he says, *you may his Faults confute,*
And over him your Pow'r is absolute:
But of his feign'd Humility take heed;
'Tis a Bait laid, to make you hear him read:
And when he leaves you, happy in his Muse,
Restless he runs some other to abuse,
And often finds; for in our scribbling times
No Fool can want a Sot to praise his Rhymes:
The dullest Piece has ever, ev'n at Court,
Met with some zealous Ass for its support:
And in all times a forward scribbling Fop
Has found some greater Fool to cry him up.



T H E







THE

Art of POETRY.

CANTO II.



S on a gaudy Day, some Shepherdess
 Does not her Head with sparkling Diamonds dress ;
 But, without Gold, or Pearl, or costly
 Scents,
 Gathers from neighbouring Fields her Ornaments :
 So, unaffected, is the PASTORAL Strain,
 Fair without Pomp, and elegantly plain.
 Its humble Method nothing has of fierce,
 And hates the rattling of Lee's Tragick Verse :
 There, native Beauty pleases, and excites,
 And never with harsh Sounds the Ear affrights.
 But in this Stile a Rhymer, often spent,
 In rage throws by his Rural Instrument ;

And

And vainly, when disorder'd Thoughts abound,
Amidst the Eclogue makes the Trumpet sound :
P A N flies, alarm'd, into the neighb'ring Woods,
And frightened Nymphs dive down into the Floods.
Another, in an abject clownish Stile,
Make Shepherds speak a Language base and vile ;
His stupid Writings most profoundly creep,
Barren of Wit, Provocatives of Sleep :
You'd swear *Tom Durfey*, in his Rustick Strains,
Was Quav'ring to the Milkmaids and the Swains ;
Changing, without respect to Sound or Dress,
Strephon and *Phillis*, into *Tom* and *Bess*.
Twixt these Extremes, 'tis hard to please the Town ;
Read *Virgil*, *Spencer*, Poets of Renown,
And equally avoid the Courier and the Clown.
Be their soft Lines, by ev'ry Grace inspir'd,
Your constant Pattern, practis'd and admir'd.
By them alone you'll quickly comprehend
How Poets, without Shame, may coadescend
To sing of Gardens, Fields, of Flow'rs and Fruit,
To stir up Shepherds, and to tune the Flute ;
Of Love's Reward to tell the happy Hour,
Daphne a Tree, *Narcissus* made a Flow'r :



And by what helps the Eclogue you may raise,

* To make it worthy *Halifax's* Praise.

This of such Writings is the nicest Part;

He who writes thus, will shew a Master's Art.

S. THE ELEGY requires a nobler Flight;

Should soar a higher Pitch, but keep in sight:

In plaintive *Dirges*, and a mournful Stile,

With unbound Hair weeps at a Funeral Pile;

It paints the Lover's Torments and Delights;

How the Nymph flatters, threatens, and invites:

But if you wou'd these Raptures well infuse,

You must a *Mistress* have, as well as *Muse*.

I hate those lukewarm Authors, whose forc'd Fire

In a cold Stile describes a hot Desire;

Who sigh by Rule, and raging in cool Blood,

Their sluggish Muse whip to an amorous Mood:

Their Extasies insipidly they feign,

And always pine, and fondly hug their Chain;

Adore their Prison, and their Suff'ring blest,

Make Sense and Reason quarrel as they please.

'Twas not of old in this affected Tone

That smooth Tibullus made his amorous Moan;

Nor Ovid, when, instructed from above,

By Nature's Rules he taught the Art of Love.

* Virg. Eclog. 4.

Si canimus sylvas, sylvae sint Consule dignæ!

You who in Elegy wou'd justly write ;

Consult your-self, and let the Heart indite.

S. BUT the bold ODE demands a stronger Turn,

For there the Muse must with all Phœbus burn ;

Mounting to Heav'n in her ambitious Flight,

Amongst the Gods and Heroes takes Delight ;

Of * Pisa's Wrestlers tells the sinewy Force,

And sings the dusty Conqu'ror's glorious Course ;

On Danube's Banks victorious Marlbro' seen,

And Spanish Iber bows to Britain's Queen.

Sometimes she flies, like an industrious Bee,

And robs the Flow'r's by Nature's Chymistry ;

Describes the Shepherds Dances, Feasts and Bliss,

And boasts from Phillis to surprize a Kiss,

† When gently she resists with feign'd Remorse,

That what she grants may seem to be by force :

Her generous Stile will oft at random start,

And by a brave Disorder show her Art.

Unlike those fearful Poets, whose cold Rhyme

In all their Raptures keeps exactest time ;

* Pisa in Elis, where the Olympick Games, w'd. to be celebrated.

† Hor. Lib. 2. Od. 2.

Facili saevicia negat

Quæ poscente magis gaudetur eripi.

Who

Who sing th' illustrious Hero's mighty Praise
(Lean Novelists) by Terms of Weeks and Days ;
Who for a Poem do a Journal show,
And tell their Tale like *Holinshend* or *Stow* :
Who trace their Hero thro a whole Campaign,
And mark each Circumstance on *Blenheim* Plain.
To these *Apollo*, niggard of his Fire,
Denies a Place in the *Pierian* Choir.

THE humorous God once took it in his head
To plague the scribbling Tribe, as some have said ;
And that he might their lab'ring Brains confound,
For the short Sonnet order'd a strict Bound ;
Set Rules for the just Measure, and the Time,
The easy Running, and alternate Rhyme ;
But, above all, those Licences deny'd
Which in their Writings the lame Sense supply'd ;
Forbad an useless Line should find a place,
Or a repeated Word appear with Grace.
A faultless Sonnet, finish'd thus, wou'd be
Worth tedious Volumes of loose Poetry.
A hundred scribbling Authors, without ground,
Believe they have this only Phoenix found :
When yet th' exactest scarce have two or three
(Among whole Tomes) from Faults and Censure free.

20 *The Art of Poetry.*

The rest, but little read, regarded less,
Are shovell'd to the Pastry from the Press.
Closing the Sense within the measur'd time,
'Tis hard to fit the Reason to the Rhyme.

§. THE EPIGRAM, with little Art compos'd,
Is one good Sentence in a Distich clos'd.
These Points, which by *Italians* first were priz'd,
Our antient Authors knew not, or despis'd :
To their false Pleasures quickly they invite
The Vulgar, dazzled with their glaring Light ;
But publick Favour so increas'd their Pride,
They overwhelm'd *Parnassus* with their Tide.
The Madrigal at first they overcome,
And the proud Sonnet fell by the same Doom ;
With them grave Tragedy adorn'd her Flights,
And mournful Elegy her Funeral Rites :
A Hero never fail'd 'em on the Stage,
Without his Point a Lover durst not rage ;
The amorous Shepherds took more care to prove
True to their Point, than faithful to their Love.
Each word, like *Janus*, had a double Face,
And Prose, as well as Verse, allow'd it place :
The Lawyer with Conceits adorn'd his Speech,
The Parson without quibbling could not preach.

At

At last affronted Reason look'd about,
And from all serious Matters shut 'em out :
Declar'd that none should use 'em without Shame,
Except a scattering in the *Epigram* ;
Provided that, by Art, and in due time
They turn'd upon the Thought, and not the Rhyme.
Thus, in all Parts, Disorders did abate ;
Yet Quibblers in the Court had leave to prate ;
Insipid Jesters, and unpleasant Fools,
A Corporation of dull punning Tools.
'Tis not, but that sometimes a dextrous Muse
May with advantage a turn'd Sense abuse,
And, on a Word, may trifle with Address ;
But above all, avoid the fond Excess,
And think not, when your Verse and Sense are lame,
With a dull Point to tag your *Epigram*.

E A C H Poem its Perfection has apart ;
The French * Rondeau in Plainness shows its Art.
The Ballad, tho the Pride of antient Time,
Has often nothing but its humorous Rhyme ;
The Madrigal may softer Passions move,
And breathe the tender Extasies of Love :
Desire to show it self, and not to wrong,
At first arm'd Truth with *SATIRE* in its Tongue.

* An old way of Writing, which began and ended with the same Measure.

LUCILIUS led the way, and bravely bold,
 To Roman Vices did the Mirror hold ;
 Protected humble Goodness from Reproach,
 Show'd Worth on Foot, and Rascals in the Coach :
Horace his pleasing Wit to this did add,
 And none, uncensur'd, could be Fool, or Mad ;
 Unhappy was that Wretch, whose Name cou'd be
 Squar'd to the Rules of their sharp Poetry.
Persius, obscure, but full of Sense and Wit,
 Affected Brevity in all he writ :
 And *Juvenal*, with Rhetorician's Rage,
 Scourg'd the rank Vices of a wicked Age.
 Tho horrid Truths thro all his Labour's shine,
 In what he writes there's something of Divine :
 * Whether he blames the *Caprean* Debauch,
 Or of *Sejanus'* Fall relates th' Approach ;
 + Or that he makes the trembling Senate come
 To the stern Tyrant, to receive their Doom ;
 Or *Roman* Vice in coarsest Habits shews,
 || And paints an Empress reeking from the Stews ;
 In all he writes appears a noble Flame :
 To imitate such Masters be your Aim.
Chaucer alone, fix'd on this solid Base
 In his old Stile, preserves a pleasant Grace :

* Sat. 10. + Sat. 4. || Sat. 6.

SUBLIQUA

Too

Too happy, if the Freedom of his Rhymes
Offended not the Custom of our Times,
The Latin Writers, Decency reject;
But English Readers challenge our Respect;
And at immodest Writings take offence,
If clean Expression cover not the Sense.

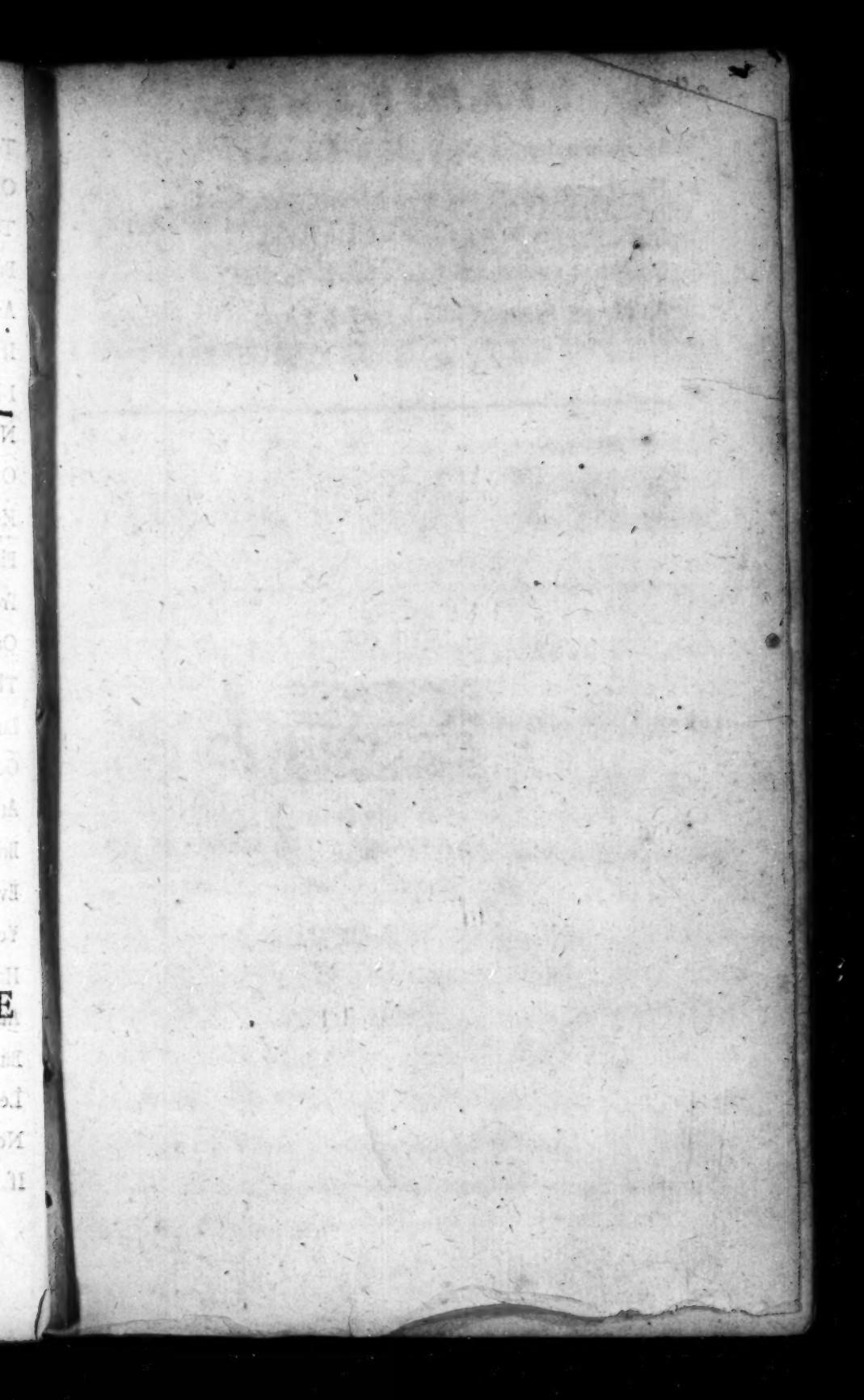
I love sharp Satire, from Obsceneness free;
Not Impudence that preaches Modesty:
Our English, who in Malice never fail,
Hence, in Lampoons and Libels, learnt to rail;
Pleasant Detraction, that by Singing goes
From Mouth to Mouth, and as it marches grows!
Our Freedom in our Poetry we see,
That Child of Joy, begot by Liberty.
But, vain Blasphemer, tremble, when you chuse
God for the Subject of your Impious Muse:
At last, those Jests which Libertines invent,
Bring the leud Author to just Punishment.
Ev'n in a Song there must be Art, and Sense;
Yet sometimes we have seen that Wine, or Chance,
Have warm'd cold Brains, and given dull Writers Mettle,
And furnish'd out a Scene for Master Settle.
But for one lucky Hit, which chanc'd to please,
Let not thy Folly grow to a Disease,
Nor think thy self a Wit; for in our Age
If a warm Fancy does some Fop ingage,

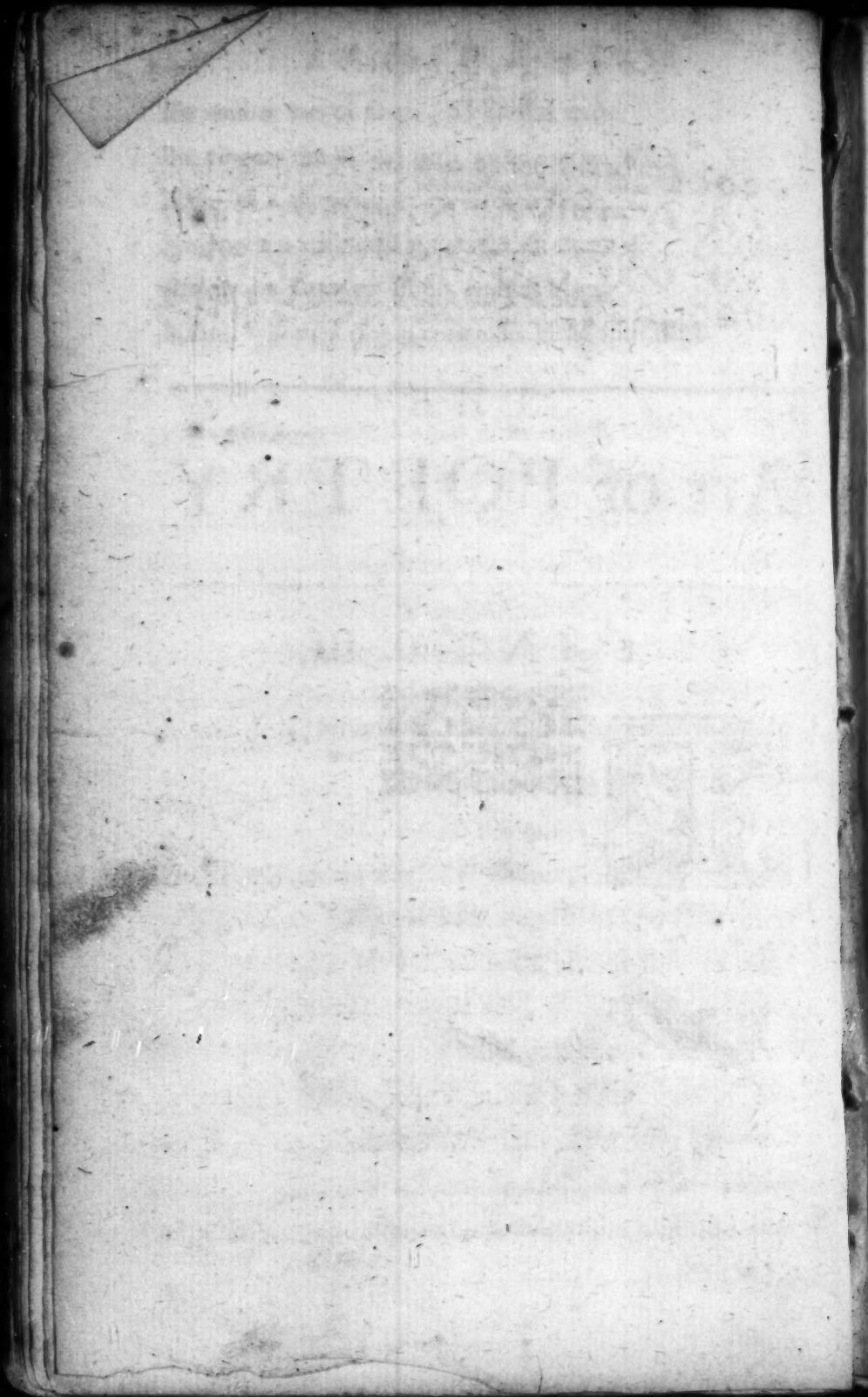
He neither eats or sleeps, till he has writ;
But plagues the World with his adulterate Wit:
Nay, 'tis a wonder, if, in his dire Rage,
He prints not his dull Follies for the Stage ;
And in the Front of all his sensless Plays,
Makes * *David Logan* crown his Head with Bays.

* *A Graver.*



T H E







THE Art of POETRY.

C A N T O III.



HERE'S not a Monster bred beneath
the Sky,

But, well dispos'd by Art, may please
the Eye :

A curious Workman, by his Skill Divine,

From an ill Object makes a good Design.
Thus, to delight us, TRAGEDY in Tears,
Provokes, for * Oedipus, our Hopes and Fears ;
For Parricide Orestes asks Relief ;
And, to encrease our Pleasure, causes Grief.
You then, who in this noble Art would rise, ^{*} O Dryden & Lee,
Come ; and in lofty Verse dispute the Prize.

* Writ by Mr. Dryden, and Mr. Lee.

Would you upon the Stage acquire Renown,
And for your Judges summon all the Town?
Would you your Works for ever should remain,
And, after Ages past, be sought again?
In all you write, observe with Care and Art
To move the Passions, and incline the Heart.
If, in a labour'd Act, the pleasing Rage
Cannot our Hopes and Fears by turns ingage,
Nor in our Mind a feeling Pity raise ;
In vain with Learned Scenes you fill your Plays :
Your cold Discourse can never move the Mind
Of a stern Critick, naturally unkind ;
Who, justly tir'd with your pedantick Flight,
Or falls asleep, or censures all you write.
The Secret is, Attention first to gain ;
To move our Minds, and then to entertain :
That from the very opening of the Scenes,
The first may shew us what the Author means.
I'm tir'd to see an Actor on the Stage,
Who knows not whether he's to laugh, or rage ;
Who, an Intrigue unravelling in vain,
Instead of pleasing, keeps my Mind in pain :
I'd rather much the nauseous Dunce should say
Downright, * my Name is *Hector* in the Play ;

* There are many such Examples in Euripides.

Than

CANTO III.

29

Than with a Mass of Miracles, ill join'd,
 Confound my Ears, and not instruct my Mind.
 Let not your Subject be too late express'd ;
 Nor Rules of Probability transgress'd.
 A Spanish Poet may, with good Event,
 In one Day's space whole Ages represent ;
 There, oft the Hero of a wand'ring Stage
 Begins a Child, and ends the Play, at Age.
 But we, who are by Reason's Rules confin'd,
 Will, that with Art the Poem be design'd ;
 That Unity of Action, Time, and Place
 Keep the Stage full, and all your Labours grace.
 * Write not what cannot be with ease conceiv'd ;
 Some Truths may be too strong to be believ'd ;
 A foolish Wonder cannot entertain ;
 My Mind's not mov'd, if your Discourse be vain.
 You may relate, what would offend the Eye ;
 † Seeing, indeed, would better satisfy :
 But there are Objects, which a curious Art
 Hides from the Eyes, yet offers to the Heart.

• *Ibid. Vers. 338.*

*Ficta voluptatis causa, sunt proxima veris.
 Nec quodcumque volet, poscar sibi fabula credi.*

† *Ibid. Vers. 108.*

*Sognius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
 Quam quæ sunt oculis subiecta fidetibus, & quæ
 Ipse sibi tradit spectator. Non tamen intus
 Digna geri, promes in scenam, multaque tolles
 Ex oculis, quæ mox narret facundia præseus.*

The Mind is most agreeably surpriz'd,
 When a well-woven Subject, long disguis'd,
 You on a sudden artfully unfold,
 And give the Whole another Face, and Mould.
 At first the *Tragedy* was void of Art ;
 A Song, where each Man danc'd, and sung his Part ;
 And of God *Bacchus* roaring out the Praise,
 Begg'd a good Vintage for their jolly Days :
 Then Wine, and Joy, were seen in each Man's Eyes,
 And a fat Goat was the best Singer's Prize.
 * *Thespis* was first, who all besmear'd with *Lies*,
 Began this Pleasure for Posterity :

And, with his carted Actors, and a Song,
 Amus'd the People as he pass'd along.
 + Next, *Aeschylus* the diff'rent Persons plac'd,
 And with a better Masque his Players grac'd :
 Upon a Theater his Verse express'd,
 And show'd his Hero with a Buskin dress'd.

* *Ibid. Vers. 275.* Ignotum Tragice genus invenisse Camoenæ
 Dicitur, & plaustris vexisse poemata *Thespis* :
 Quæ canerent, agerentque per uncti fascibus ora.

† *Ibid. Vers. 220.* Carmine qui Tragico vilem certavit ob hircum.
Vers. 278.
 Post hunc personæ pallaque reporror honestæ
 Aeschylus & modicis instravit pulpta tignis,
 Et vocuit magnumque loqui nigræ cothurno.

Then

Then *Sophocles*, the Genius of his Age,
 Increas'd the Pomp and Beauty of the Stage,
 Ingag'd the *Chorus* Song in every Part,
 And polish'd rugged Verse by Rules of Art.
 * He, in the Greek, did those Perfections gain,
 Which the weak *Latin* never could attain.
 Our pious Fathers in their Priest-rid Age,
 As Impious and Profane, abhor'd the Stage.
 † A Troop of silly Pilgrims, as 'tis said,
 Foolishly zealous, scandalously play'd
 The Angels, God, the Virgin, and the Saints,
 (Instead of Heroes, and of Love's Complaints.)
 || At last, right Reason did her Laws reveal,
 And show'd the Folly of their ill-plac'd Zeal,
 Silenc'd those Nonconformists of the Age,
 And rais'd the lawful Heroes of the Stage.
 Only th' Athenian ** Mask was laid aside,
 And Chorus by the Musick was supply'd.

OF COURSES SINCE THE TIME OF HUMPHREY'S
INGENIOUS Love, inventive of new Arts,
 Mingled in Plays, and quickly touch'd our Hearts.

* See Quintilian, Lib. X. Ch. I.

† Their Plays are in Print.

‡ Tragedy, in France, did not begin to be carried into under Lewis XIII.

** This Mask us'd to be worn upon the Actor's Face, and represented the Character he was to play.

This Passion never could Resistance find,
 But knows the shortest Passage to the Mind.
 Paint, if you will, a Hero smit with Love ;
 But let him not like a tame Shepherd move :
 Let not *Achilles* be like *Thyrsis* seen,
 Or for a *Cyrus* show an *Artamene* :
 Let *Love*, oft try'd by Strugglings most severe,
 Not Virtue, but Infirmitie appear.
 Of Romance Heroes, than the low Design ;
 Yet to great Hearts some Human Weakness join :
Achilles must, with *Homer's* Hear, engage ;
 For an Affront I'm pleas'd to see him rage.
 By those light Frailties of your Hero's Breast
 The Force of Human Nature is confess'd.
 To leave known Rules you cannot be allow'd ;
 * Make *Agamemnon* Covetous and Proud ;
Aeneas in Religious Rites austere ;
 Keep to each Man his proper Character.
 Of Countries and of Times the Humours know ;
 From diff'rent Climates, diff'rent Customs flow :
 And strive to shun their Fault, who vainly dress
 An Antique Hero like some Modern Ass ;

* Ibid. Vers. 119.

Aut fatus sequere, aut sibi convenientia fuge
Scriptor, honoratum si forte reponis Achillem,
Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jurâ negat sibi nasa, &c.

CANTO III.

AE
33

Who make old Romans like our English move,
Show CATO sparkish, or make BRUTUS love.
In a Romance those Errors are excus'd :
There 'tis enough that, reading, we're amus'd :
Rules too severe would then be useless found ;
But the strict Scene must have a juster Bound :
Exact Decorum we must always find.
If then you form some Hero in your Mind,
Be sure your Image with it self agree ;
For what he first appears, he still must be.
Affected Wits will naturally incline
To paint their Figures by their own Design :
Your Bully Poets, Bully Heroes write ;
Chapman in *Bussy D' Ambois* took Delight,
And thought Perfection was to huff and fight.

§ WISE Nature by * Variety does please ;
Clothe diff'ring Passions, in a diff'ring Dress :
Bold Anger in rough haughty Words appears ;
Sorrow is humble, and dissolves in Tears.

* Ibid. Vers. 105.

Tristia mecum

Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum :
Ludentem lastiva : severum feria dicta.
Format enim Natura prius nos intus ad omneum
Fortunarum habitum.

III OTIA
 Make not your * *Hecuba* with Fury rage,
 And shew a Wanting Grief upon the Stage ;
 Or vainly tell how the rough *Tanais* bore
 † *His Sevenfold Waters to the Euxine Shore* :
 These swoln Expressions, this affected Noise
 Shows like some Pedant, that declaims to Boys.
 In Sorrow, you must softer Methods keep ;
 And to excite our Tears, your self must weep :
 Those bombast Words with which ill Plays abound,
 Come not from Hearts that are in Sadness drown'd.

THE Theater for a young Poet's Rhymes
 Is a bold Venture in our knowing Times :
 An Author cannot easily purchase Fame ;
 Criticks are always apt to hiss, and blame :
 You may be judg'd by every Ass in Town ;
 The Privilege is bought for Half a Crown.
 To please, you must a hundred Changes try ;
 Sometimes be humble, sometimes soar on high :
 In noble Thoughts must every where abound,
 Be Easy, Pleasant, Solid, and Profound.
 To these you must surprizing Touches join,
 And shew us a new Wonder in each Line ;

* *Ibid. Vers. 95.*
 Tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri.
 Telephus & Peleus, quam pauper & exsul uterque
 Projicit ampullas & sesquipedalia verba.
 Si curat cor spectantis tetigisse querela.

† *Senec. Trag. Troas. Scen. 1.*

That

That all in a just Method well design'd,
May leave a strong Impression on the Mind.
These are the Arts that *Tragedy* maintain:

S BUT the *HEROICK* claims a loftier Strain,
In the Narration of some great Design,
Invention, Art, and Fable, all must join:
Here Fiction must employ its utmost Grace;
All must assume a Body, Mind, and Face:
Each Virtue a Divinity is seen;
Prudence is *Pallas*, Beauty *Paphos*' Queen:
'Tis not a Cloud from whence swift Lightnings fly;
But *Jupiter*, that thunders from the Sky:
Nor a rough Storm that gives the Sailor pain,
But angry *Neptune* ploughing up the Main:
Echo's no more an empty airy Sound;
But a fair Nymph that mourns her Lover drown'd:
Thus in the endless Treasure of his Mind,
The Poet does a thousand Figures find;
Around the Work his Ornaments he pours,
And strows with lavish Hand his opening Flow'rs.
'Tis no great wonder if a Tempest bore
The *Trojan* Fleet against the *Lybian* Shore;
From faithless Fortune this is no surprise,
For every Day 'tis common to our Eyes.

* But that avengeful *Juno* should destroy,
And overwhelm the rest of ruin'd *Troy* ;
That *Æolus*, with the fierce Goddess join'd,
Should open the dark Prisons of the Wind ;
That angry *Neptune*, looking o'er the Main,
Rebukes the Tempests, calms the Waves again ;
Their Vessels from the dang'rous Quick-sands steers ;
These are the Springs that move our Hopes and Fears.
Without these Ornaments before our Eyes,

† Th' unsinew'd Poem languishes and dies :
Your Poet in his Art will ever fail,
And tell you but a dull insipid Tale.
In vain have our mistaken Authors try'd
These antient Ornaments to lay aside ;
Thinking our God, and Prophets whom he sent,
Might act like those the Poets did invent,
To fright poor Readers in each Line with Hell,
And talk of *Satan*, *Astaroth* and *Bell*.
The Myst'ries which we Christians must believe,
Disdain such gaudy Pageants to receive.
All that the Gospel offers to our Thoughts,
Is Penitence, and Punishment for Faults :

* Vid. Virg. *Eneid.* lib. 1.

† The Author had in his Eye M. Sorlin des Marests, who wrote against Fable.

But mingling Falshoods with those Mysteries,
Would make our sacred Truths appear like Eyes.
Besides, what pleasure can it be to hear
The Howlings of repining *Lucifer*,
Whose Rage at your imagin'd Hero flies;
And oft with God himself disputes the Prize ?
Tasso, you'll say, has done it with Applause ;
It is not here I mean to judg his Cause :
Yet, tho our Age has so extol'd his Name,
His Works had never gain'd immortal Fame,
If holy *Godfrey* in his Extasies
Had conquer'd only *Satan*, on his Knees ;
If *Tancred*, and *Armida's* pleasing Form,
Did not his melancholy Theme adorn.

* **N O T** that a *Christian Poem* ought to be
Fill'd with the Fictions of Idolatry :
But in a common merry Piece, to fear
The Gods, and Heathen Ornaments forbear ;
To banish Tritons who the Seas invade,
To take *Pan's* Whistle, or the *Fates* degrade ;
To hinder *Charon* in his leaky Boat
From stowing Shepherds with the Man of Note ;
Is with vain Scruples to disturb your Mind,
And search Perfection you can never find.

* See Ariosto.

As well they may forbid us to present
Prudence and Justice for an Ornament,
To paint old *Jamus* with his double Face,
And take from Time his Scythe, his Wings and Glass;
And every where, as't were Idolatry,
Banish Descriptions from our Poetry.
Leave 'em their Pious Follies to pursue ;
But let our Reason such vain Fears subdue :
And let us not, amongst our Vanities,
Of the true God create a God of Lyes.

I-N Fable we a thousand Beauties see,
And the smooth Names seem made for Poetry ;
As *Hector*, *Alexander*, *Helen*, *Phyllis*,
Ulysses, *Agamemnon*, and *Achilles* :
In such a Crowd, the Poet were to blame
To chuse King *Chilp'rick* for his Hero's Name.
Sometimes, the Name being well or ill apply'd,
Will the whole Fortune of your Work decide.
Would you your Reader never should be tir'd ?
Chuse some great Hero fit to be admir'd,
In Courage signal, and in Virtue bright,
Let e'en his very Failings give Delight ;
Let his great Actions our Attention bind ;
Like *Cesar*, or like *Scipio*, frame his Mind ;

And*

And not like *Oedipus's* perjur'd Race ;
A vulgar Conqueror is a Theme too base.
Chuse not your Tale of Incidents too full ;
Too much Variety may make it dull :
Achilles' Rage alone, when wrought with Skill,
Abundantly does a whole *Iliad* fill.
Be your Narrations lively, short, and smart ;
In your Descriptions show your noblest Art :
There 'tis your Poetry may be employ'd ;
Yet you must trivial Circumstance avoid.
Nor imitate that Fool, who to describe
The wondrous Marches of the chosen Tribe,
Plac'd on the Sides, to see their Armies pass,
* *The Fishes staring through the Liquid Glass* ;
Describ'd a Child, who with his little Hand,
Pick'd up the shining Pebbles from the Sand.
Such Objects are too mean to stay our Sight ;
Allow your Work a just and noble Flight.
† BE your beginning plain ; and take good heed
Too soon you mount not on the fiery Steed :

* St. Amant, in a Poem intitul'd, *Moïse Sauve*.

† *Ibid. Vers. 136.*

Nec sic incipies, ut Scriptor Cylicus olim :
Fortunam Priami cantabo &c nobile bellum,
Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu ?
Parturiunt montes, nasceretur ridiculus mus,
Quanto rectius hic ; qui nil molitur inepte !
Dic mihi, Musa, virum capta post tempora Trojae,
Qui mores hominum multorum vidit & urbes.
Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem,
Cogitar, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat,

Nor tell your Reader, in a thund'ring Verse,

* *The Conqueror of Conquerors I rehearse.*

What can an Author after this produce ?

The lab'ring Mountain must bring forth a Mouse.

Much better are we pleas'd with his † Address,

Who, without making such vast Promises,

Says, in an easier Stile, and plainer Sense,

" *I sing the Combats of that Pious Prince*

" *Who from the Phrygian Coast his Armies bore,*

" *And landed first on the Lavinian Shore.*

His opening Muse sets not the World on fire,

And yet performs more than we can require :

Quickly you'll hear him celebrate the Fame,

And future Glory of the Roman Name ;

Of Styx and Acheron describe the Floods,

And wandring Cæsars in Elysian Woods.

WITH Figures numberlets your Story grace,

And every thing in beauteous Colours trace :

At once you may be pleasing, and sublime ;

I hate a heavy melancholy Rhyme :

I'd rather read Orlando's comick Tale,

Than a dull Author always stiff and stale,

* The first Line of Scudery's *Alarie*.

† Virgil's *Aeneids*.

CANTO III.

41

Who thinks himself dishonour'd in his Stile,
If on his Works the Graces ever smile.

YOU'D swear that *Homer*, matchless in his Art,
* Stole *Venus'* Girdle, to ingage the Heart :
His Divine Works vast Treasures do unfold,
And whatsoe'er he touches, turns to Gold :
All in his hands new Beauty does acquire ;
He always pleases, and can never tire.
A happy Warmth he every where may boast ;
Nor is he in too-long Diggessions lost :
His Verses without Rule a Method find,
And of themselves appear in order join'd :
All without Trouble, answers his Intent ;
Each Syllable is tending to th' Event.
Let his Example your Endeavours rase :
To love his Writings, is a kind of Praise.

A POEM, where we all Perfections find,
Is not the Work of a fantastick Mind :
There must be Care, and Time, and Skill, and Pains ;
Not the first Heat of unexperienc'd Brains.
Yet sometimes Artless Poets, when the Rage
Of a warm Fancy does their Minds ingage,

* Iliad. lib. XIV.

Puff'd

Puff'd with vain Pride, presume they understand,
 And boldly take the Trumpet in their Hand :
 Their Fustian Muse each Accident confounds,
 Nor ever rises but by Leaps and Bounds ;
 Till their small Stock of Learning quickly spent,
 Their Poem dies for want of Nourishment.
 In vain Mankind the hot-brain'd Fools decries,
 No branding Censures can unyeil their Eyes ;
 With Impudence the Laurel they invade,
 Resolv'd to like the Monsters they have made.
Virgil, compar'd to them, is flat and dry ;
 And *Homer* understood not Poetry :
 Against their Merit if this Age rebel,
 To future Times, for Justice they appeal ;
 But waiting till Mankind shall do 'em right,
 And bring their Works triumphantly to light ;
 Neglected Heaps we in By-Corners lay,
 Where they become to Worms and Moths a Prey ;
 Forgot, in Dust and Cobwebs let 'em rest,
 Whilst we return from whence we first digress'd.

* FROM the Success which *Tragick* Writers found,
 In *Athens* first was *Comedy* renown'd.

* *Ibid. Verf. 281.*
 Successit vetus huic *Comedia*, non sine multa
 Laude ; sed in vitium libertas excidit & vim
 Dignam lege regi ; lex est accepta, chorusque
 Turpiter obticuit.

Th' Abusive Grecian there, by pleasing ways,
 Dispers'd his natural Venom in his Plays :
 Wisdom, and Virtue, Honour, Wit, and Sense,
 Were subject to buffooning Insolence :
 Poets were publickly approv'd, and sought,
 Who Vice extol'd, and Virtue set at naught ;
 And *Socrates* himself, in that loose Age,
 Was made the Pastime of a * scoffing Stage.
 At last the Publick took in hand the Cause,
 And cur'd the Madness by the Pow'r of Laws ;
 Forbad at any Time, or any Place,
 To name the Person, or describe the Face.
 The Stage its antient Fury thus let fall,
 And Comedy diverted without Gall ;
 By mild Reproofs, recover'd Minds diseas'd,
 And, sparing Persons, innocently pleas'd.
 Each Man was nicely shwon in this new Glass,
 And smil'd to think he was not meant the Ass :
 A Miser oft would laugh the first, to find
 A faithful Draught of his own sordid Mind ;
 And Fops were with such Care and Cunning writ,
 They lik'd the Piece for which themselves did sit.

Y O U then, that would the Comick Laurels wear,
 To study Nature be your only Care :

* Vid. Nab. Com. *Aristophan.*

Who e'er knows Man, and by a curious Art
 Discerns the hidden Secrets of the Heart ;
 He who observes, and naturally can paint,
 The jealous Fool, the fawning Sycophant,
 A sober Wit, an enterprizing Ass,
 A humorous Otter, or a Hudibras ;
 May safely in these nobler Lists ingage,
 And make 'em act and speak upon the Stage.

STRIVE to be natural in all you write,
 And paint with Colours that may please the Sight.
 Nature in various Figures does abound,
 And in each Mind are diff'rent Humours found :
 A Glance, a Touch, discovers to the Wise ;
 But every Man has not discerning Eyes.

* ALL-CHANGING Time does also change the Mind ;
 And diff'rent Ages, diff'rent Pleasures find.

+ YOUTH, hot and furious, cannot brook delay,
 By flattering Vice is eas'ly led away ;

* Ibid. Vers. 156.
 Ætatis cuiusque notandi sunt tibi mores,
 Mobilibusque decor naturis, dandus & annis.
 † Vers. 161.
 Imberbis juvenis —
 Cereus in vitium fletri, monitoribus asper,
 Utilium tardus Provisor, prodigus xris,

Sublimis,

Vain in Discourse, inconstant in Desire,
 In Censure rash, in Pleasures all on fire.
 The manly Age does steddiest Thoughts enjoy ;
 Power and Ambition do his Soul employ :
 Against the Turns of Fate he sets his Mind ;
 And by the past, the future Hopes to find.
 Decrepit Age, still adding to his Stores,
 For others heaps the Treasure he adores.
 In all his Actions keeps a frozen pace ;
 Past Times extols, the present to debase ;
 Incapable of Pleasures, Youth abuse ;
 In others blames, what Age does him refuse.

YOUR Actors must by Reason be control'd ;
 Let Young Men speak like Young, Old Men like Old :
 Observe the Town, and study well the Court ;
 For thither various Characters resort.
 Thus 'twas great *Johnson* purchas'd his Renown,
 And in his Art had borne away the Crown ;

Sablimis, cupidusque & amata relinquere pernix.
 Conversis studiis, artis, animisque virilis.
 Quarit opes & amicinas, inservit honoris,
 Commissose caveret, quod mox mutare laboret.
 Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod
 Querit & inventis miser abstiner, ac timet uici.
 Vel quod res omnes timide, gelideque ministrat.
 Dilator, spe longus, iners avidusque futuri,
 Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
 Se Puer, censor castigatorque minorum, &c.

Ne forte senties

Mandentur juveni partes, pueroque viriles.

If

If less desirous of the Peoples Praise,
He had not with low Farce debas'd his Plays ;
Mixing dull Ribaldry with Wit refin'd,
And Harlequin with noble Terence join'd.
When in the Fox I see the Tortoise hist,
I lose the Author of the Alchymist.
The Comick Wit, born with a smiling Air,
Must Tragick Grief, and pompous Verse forbear ;
Yet may he not, as on a Market-place,
With baudy Jests amuse the Populace :
With well-bred Conversation you must please,
And your Intrigue unravel'd be with Ease :
Your Action still should Reason's Rules obey,
Nor in an empty Scene mistake its way.
Your humble Stile must sometimes gently rise,
And your Discourse sententious be, and wise :
The Passions must to Nature be confin'd,
And Scenes to Scenes with artful weaving join'd ;
Your Wit must not unseasonably play,
But follow Bus'ness, never lead the way.
* Observe how Terence does this Error shun ;
A careful Father chides his am'rous Son ;
Then see that Son, whom no Advice can move,
Forget those Orders, and pursue his Love.

* See the Andrian and the Adelphi.

'Tis not a well-drawn Picture we discover ;
'Tis a true Son, a Father, and a Lover.
I like an Author who reforms the Age,
And keeps the right Decorum of the Stage ;
Who always pleases by just Reason's Rule :
But for a tedious Droll, a quibbling Fool,
Who with low naufeous Baudry fills his Plays ;
Let him be gone, and on two Treffels raise
Some *Smithfield* Stage, where he may act his Pranks,
And make Jack-Puddings speak to Mountebanks.

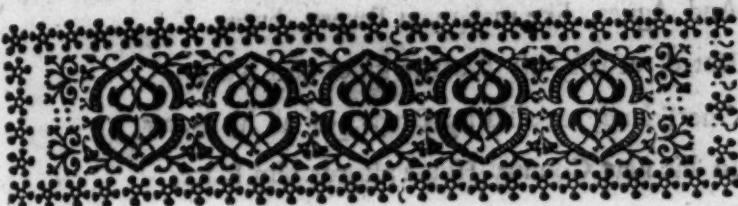


THE

III откa



三



THE

Art of POETRY.

CANTO IV.



N Florence dweit a Doctor of Renown,
The Scourge of God, and Terror of the
Town,
Who all the Cant of Physick had by
Heart,

And never murder'd but by Rules of Art,
The publick Mischief was his private Gain ;
Children their slaughter'd Parents sought in vain :
A Brother here his poison'd Brother wept ;
Some bloodless dy'd, and some by Opium slept.

Colds, at his Presence, would to Frenzies turn ;
And Agues, like malignant Fevers, burn.
Hated, at last, his Practice gives him o'er :
One Friend, unkill'd by Drugs, of all his Stores,
In his new Country-House affords him Place,
'Twas a rich *Abbot*, and a building *Aſſ*.
Here first in play the Doctor's Talent came,
Who seem'd to rival * *Wren's* immortal Fame :
Of this new *Portico* condemns the Face,
And turns the Entrance to a better Place ;
Designs the Stair-case at the other end.
His Friend approves, does for his *Mason* send :
He comes ; the Doctor's Arguments prevail.
In short, to finish this our hum'rous Tale,
He *Galen's* dang'rous Science does reject,
And from ill *Doctor* turns good *Architect*.

I N this Example we may have our Part :
Rather be *Mason* ('tis an useful Art !)
Than a dull Poet ; for that Trade accurſt,
Admits no Mean betwixt the best and worſt.
In other Sciences, without Disgrace
A Candidate may fill a ſecond Place ;
But Poetry no Medium can admit,
No Reader suffers an indiff'rent Wit.

* Sir Christopher Wren, the Architect.

The ruin'd Stationers against him baul,
And Fragrant Jacob kicks him from his Stall.
Burlesque, at least our Laughter may excite ;
But a cold Writer never can delight.
* *Grub's Ballad* has, by much, more Wit and Art,
Than the stiff formal Stile of *Gondibert*.
Be not affected with that empty Praise
Which your vain Flatterers will sometimes raise ;
And when you read, with Extasy will say,
The finish'd Piece ! The Admirable Play !
Which, when expos'd to Censure and to Light,
Cannot endure a Critick's piercing Sight.
A hundred Authors Fates have been foretold ;
And *Ogilby* is printed, but not sold.
Here all the World consider every Thought ;
A Fool by chance may stumble on a Fault :
Yet, when *Apollo* does your Muse inspire,
Be not impatient to expose your Fire ;
Nor imitate the *Motteu's* of our Times,
Those tuneful Readers of their own dull Rhymes,
Who seize on all th' Acquaintance they can meet,
And stop the Passengers that walk the Street :

* *St. George for England.*

You can no * Church, no Monastery chuse,
To shelter you from their pursuing Muse.
I've said before, be patient when they blame ;
To alter for the better, is no Shame.
Yet yield not to a Fool's Impertinence :
Sometimes conceited Scepticks, void of Sense,
By their false Taste condemn some finish'd Part,
And blame the noblest Flights of Wit and Art.
In vain their fond Opinions you deride ;
With their lov'd Follies they are satisfy'd ;
And their weak Judgment, void of Sense and Light,
Thinks nothing can escape their feeble Sight :
Their dang'rous Counsels do not cure, but wound ;
To shun the Storm, they run your Verse a-ground ;
And thinking to escape a Rock, you're drown'd.
Chuse a sure Judg to censure what you write,
Whose Reason leads, and Knowldg gives you Light,
Whose stiddy Hand will prove your faithful Guide,
And touch the darling Follies you would hide :
He, in your Doubts, will carefully advise,
And clear the Mist before your partial Eyes.
'Tis he will tell you, to what noble Height
A generous Muse may sometimes take her Flight ;

* The Author here means M. du Perrier, who wou'd make him stay the Recital of a piece of Poetry of his, even at Church, whether he wou'd or no.

When, too much fetter'd with the Rules of Art,
 May from her stricter Bounds and Limits part.
 But such a perfect Judg you'll rarely see,
 And every Rhymer knows not Poetry ;
 Nay, some there are, for writing Verse extol'd,
 Who know not *Lucan's* Dross from *Virgil's* Gold.

WOULD you in this great Art acquire Renown ?

Authors, observe the Rules I here lay down.

* In prudent Lessons every where abound ;
 With Pleasant, join the Useful and the Sound :
 A sober Reader, a vain Tale will flight ;
 He seeks as well Instruction, as Delight.
 Let all your Thoughts to Virtue be confin'd,
 Still off'ring noble Figures to the Mind.
 I love not those loose Writers, who employ
 Their guilty Muse, good Manners do destroy ;
 Who with false Colours still deceive our Eyes,
 And show us Vice, dress'd in a fair Disguise.
 Yet do I not their sullen Muse approve,
 Who from all modest Writings banish Love ;

* *Ibid. vers. 341.*

Centuriae seniorum agitant expertia frugis, &c.
 Omne ruit punctum, qui miscuit urile dulci,
 Lectorem delectando pariterque monendo.

Who strip the Play-House of its chief Intrigue,

* And make a Murderer of Roderigue.

The lightest Love, if decently express'd,

Will raise no vicious Motions in our Breast.

Dido in vain may weep, and ask Relief;

I blame her Folly, whilst I share her Grief.

A virtuous Author, in his charming Art,

To please the Sense needs not corrupt the Heart;

His Heat will never cause a guilty Fire:

To follow Virtue then be your desire.

In vain your Art and Vigor are express'd;

'Th' obscene Expression shows th' infected Breast.

But above all, base Jealousies avoid,

In which derafting Poets are employ'd:

A noble Wit dares lib'rally commend;

And scorns to grudg at his deserving Friend.

Base Rivals, who true Wit and Merit hate,

Caballing still against it with the Great,

Maliciously aspire to gain Renown,

By standing up, and pulling others down.

Never debase your self by treach'rrous ways,

Nor by such abject Methods seek for Praise:

Let not your only Bus'ness be to write;

Be Virtuous, Just, and in your Friends delight.

* *The Cid, Translated into English.*

'Tis not enough your Poems be admir'd ;
But strive your Conversation be desir'd :
Write for immortal Fame ; nor ever chuse
Gold for the Object of a gen'rous Muse.
I own a noble Wit may, without Crime,
Receive a lawful Tribute for his Time :
Yet I abhor those Writers who despise
Their Honour, and alone their Profit prize :
Who their *Apollo* basely will degrade,
And of a noble Science make a Trade.
Before kind Reason did her Light display,
And Government taught Mortals to obey ;
Men, like wild Beasts, did Nature's Laws pursue,
They fed on Herbs, and Drink from Rivers drew ;
Their brutal Force, on Lust and Rapine bent,
Committed Murders without punishment :
Reason at last, by her all-conquering Arts,
Reduc'd these Savages, and tun'd their Hearts ;
Mankind from Bogs, and Woods, and Caverns calls,
And Towns and Cities fortifies with Walls :
Thus Fear of Justice made proud Rapine cease,
And shelter'd Innocence by Laws and Peace.

THESE Benefits from Poets we receiv'd,
From whence are rais'd those Fictions since believ'd,
That

* That *Orpheus*, by his soft Harmonious Strains,
 Tam'd the fierce Tigers of the *Thracian* Plains;
Amphion's Notes, by their melodious Pow'rs,
 Drew Rocks and Woods, and rais'd the *Theban* Tow'rs.
 These Miracles from Numbers did arise,
 Since which, in Verse Heav'n taught its Mysteries ;
 And by a Priest, possess'd with rage Divine,
Apollo spoke from his prophetick Shrine.
 Soon after, *Homer* the old Heroes prais'd,
 And noble Minds by great Examples rais'd ;
 Then *Hesiod* did his *Grecian* Swains incline
 To till the Fields, and prune the bounteous Vine.
 Thus useful Rules were by the Poets Aid,
 In easy Numbers, to rude Men convey'd,
 And pleasingly their Precepts did impart ;
 First charm'd the Ear, and then engag'd the Heart :
 The Muses thus their Reputation rais'd,
 And with just Gratitude, in *Greece* were prais'd.
 With pleasure Mortals did their Wonders see,
 And sacrific'd to their Divinity :

* *Ibid. Vers. 391.*

Sylvestres homines sacer interpresque Deorum
 Cædibus & vixi ~~sed~~ deterruit *Orpheus* :
 Dictus ab hoc lenire Tigres, rapidosque Leones,
 Dictus & *Amphion* *Thebanas* condit' arcis,
 Saxa movere sono testudinis, & prece blanda
 Ducere quo vellet.

But

But Want, at last, base Flatt'ry entertain'd,
 And old Parnassus with this Vice was stain'd ;
 Desire of Gain dazzling the Poets Eyes,
 Their Works were fill'd with Flattery and Lyes.
 Thus needy Wits a vile Revenue made,
 And Verse became a mercenary Trade.
 Debase not with so mean a Vice thy Art :
 If Gold must be the Idol of thy Heart,
 Fly, fly th' unfruitful Heliconian Strand ;
 Those Streams are not inrich'd with Golden Sand.
 Great Wits, as well as Warriors, only gain
 Laurels and Honours for their Toil and Pain.
 But, what ? * *An Author cannot live on Fame,*
 Or pay a Rock'ning with a lofty Name :
 A Poet to whom Fortune is unkind,
 Who when he goes to bed has hardly din'd ;
 Takes little Pleasure in Parnassus Dreams,
 Or relishes the Heliconian Streams,
 Horace had Ease and Plenty when he writ,
 And free from Cares for Money or for Meat,
 Did not expect his Dinner from his Wit.
 'Tis true ; but Verse is cherish'd by the Great,
 And now none famish who deserve to eat.

* — Neque enim cantare sub antro
 Pierio, thyrumve potest contingere metra
 Paupertas, atque æris inops, quo nocte dieque
 Corpus eger, satur est, cum clamat Horatius, Evæ !

Juvenal. Sat. vii. Vers. 59. What

What can we fear, when Virtue, Arts, and Sense
Receive the Stars propitious Influence ;
When an Indulgent Queen, by early Grants,
Rewards your Merits, and prevents your Wants ?
Sing then her Glory, celebrate her Fame ;
Your noblest Theme is her Immortal Name.
Let mighty *Spencer* raise his reverend Head,
Cowley and *Denham* start up from the Dead ;
Let *Garth* his Lyre resume, and Off'lings bring ;
Our Monarch's Praise let bright-ey'd Virgins sing ;
Let *Rowe's* judicious Muse our Stage refine,
And his great Models form by this Design.
But where's a second *Virgil* to rehearse
Our *ANNIA's* Glories in his Epick Verse ?
What *Orpheus* sing her Triumphs o'er the Main,
And make the Hills and Forests move again ;
Show her bold Nayy on the *Celtick* Shore,
And *Gallia* trembling when her Cannons roar ;
Paint *Europe's* Ballance in her steady Hand,
Whilst the two Worlds in expectation stand
Of Peace or War, that wait on her Command ?
But as I speak, new Glories strike my Eyes,
Glories bestow'd by Heav'n, as Valour's Prize ;
Blessings of Peace, that with their milder Rays
Adorn her Reign, and bring *Saturnian* Days.

Now let Rebellion, Discord, Vice and Rage,
That have in Patriots Forms debauch'd our Age,
Vanish with all the Ministers of Hell ;
Her Rays their pois'rous Vapours did dispel :
'Tis she alone our Safety did create ;
Her own firm Soul secur'd the Nation's Fate,
Oppos'd to all th' Incendiaries of State.

Authors, for her your great Endeavours raise ;
The loftiest Numbers will but reach her Praise.
For me, whose Verse in Satire has been bred,
And never durst *Heroick* Measures tread ;
Yet you shall see me, in that famous Field,
With Eyes and Voice, my best Assistance yield ;
Offer you Lessons, that my Infant Muse
Learnt, when she *Horace* for her Guide did chuse :
Second your Zeal with Wishes, Heart, and Eyes,
And afar off hold up the Glorious Prize.
But pardon too, if, zealous for the Right,
A strict Observer of each noble Flight ;
From the fine Gold I separate th' Allay,
And show how hasty Writers sometimes stray :
Apter to blame, than know wing how to mend ;
A sharp, but yet a necessary Friend.

F I N I S.

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